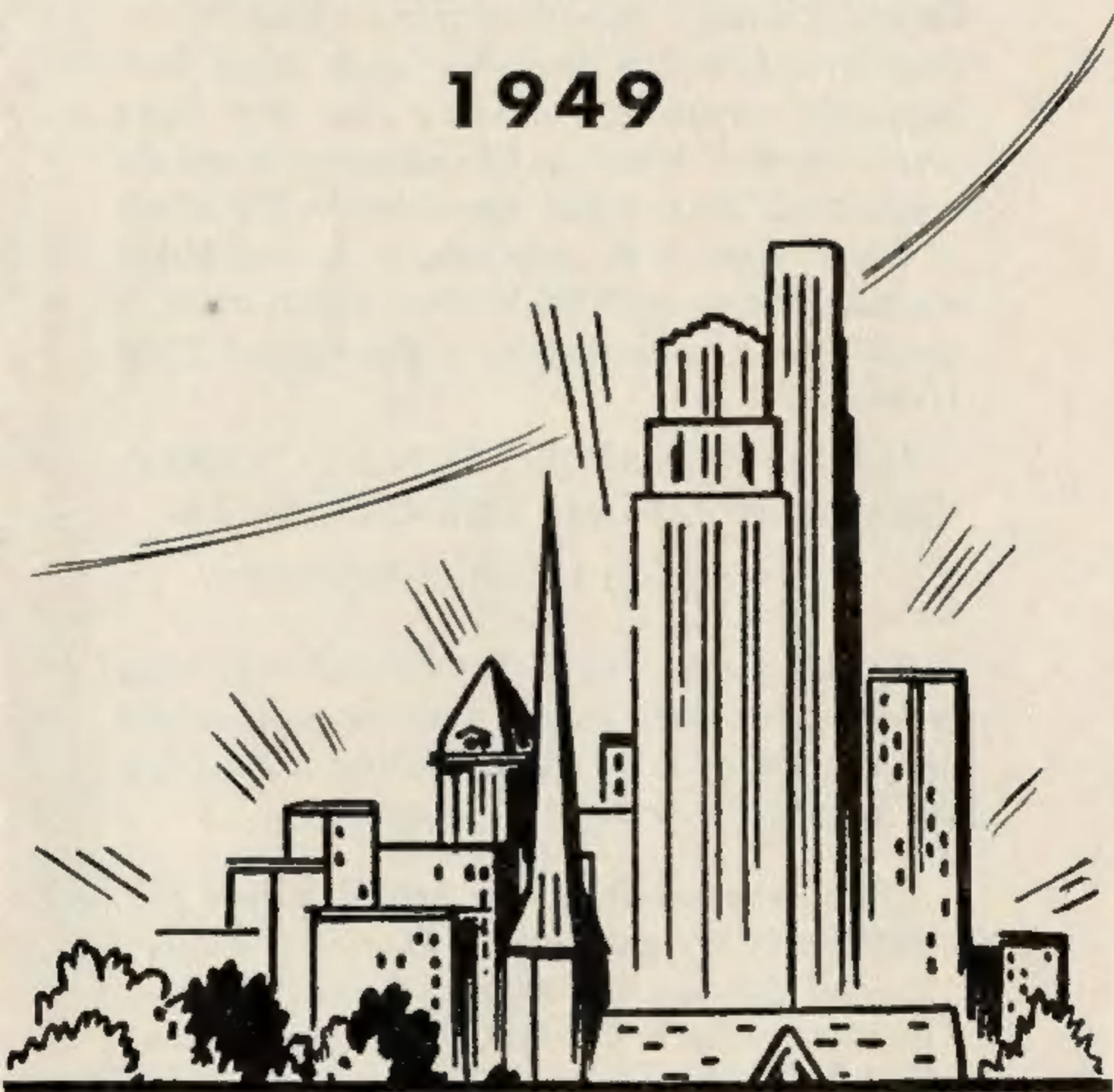


**1903**

**ANNIVERSARY OF FLIGHT**

**1949**



**The Dayton Chamber of Commerce**  
**Dayton 2, Ohio**

**T**his first day cover memorializes a significant event in the history of the world. It occurred on December 17, 1903, on the sand dunes of Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

But it began, actually, several years earlier, in a bicycle shop in Dayton, Ohio.

Hence December 17 is a day that is close to the hearts of Daytonians. The day came peacefully to Dayton. On the surface, there was not much to distinguish it from any other day. True, things were happening around the world but they didn't seem important. It was the Christmas season and the approaching holiday was uppermost in the minds of Daytonians. Then suddenly, a telegraph key shattered the quiet of the Western Union office. It spelled out a message from a place called Kitty Hawk:

"FIRST SUSTAINED FLIGHT TODAY  
VERY HAPPY HOME FOR CHRISTMAS.

"(Signed) ORVILLE WRIGHT"

It was a short message. But then, so were other messages that made history. Only no one realized this was history being made. No one, that is, but the Wright Brothers.

From start to finish, the first flight was an exclusively Wright triumph. It was a triumph, too, for the City of Dayton. The Kitty Hawk, the first plane to fly, was the first plane the Wright Brothers ever built. They built it in Dayton.

It was powered by the first multiple cylinder engine they ever built. They built it in Dayton. It used the first propellers they ever built. They built these, too, in Dayton. And it was all based on their own research in Dayton.

Hence, it is fitting and proper that this commemorative cover should emanate from Dayton. The stamp you see on this cover was released Saturday morning, December 17 in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. It was flown to Dayton, Ohio through the facilities of the Miami Valley Flying Service, by arrangement of Carl Soendlin, secretary of the Dayton Philatelic Society. Barring bad weather or other contingency, this cover should be canceled in Dayton on December 17, so that it should become, in fact and in name, a "first day" cover.

The cachet on this cover was designed by Richard D. Fullerton, a past president of the Dayton Philatelic Society. This leaflet was printed and distributed by the Dayton Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber of Commerce traditionally observes December 17 as the Anniversary of Flight. It proudly boasts of Dayton as the birthplace of aviation.

For here aviation history began. Here the aircraft industry had its beginnings. Here aeronautical research began, flourished and still continues.

In war and in peace Dayton's men of enterprise, its industries and its institutions have kept pace with the ever-continuing conquest of the air.

At the very center of things, Dayton is a crossroad in the world of aviation, industry and commerce and Dayton marches on!

